

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-12

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MANILA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 029673

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: SHUM, RP

SUBJECT: LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS

REF: MANILA 1301

1. WE SEE POSSIBILITY OF ADVANCING THE HUMAN RIGHTS GOALS
YOU OUTLINED IN REFTEL DURING YOUR NEXT MEETING ON THIS
SUBJECT WITH MARCOS. YOU MAY WISH TO CONSIDER MAKING
POINTS ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES WITH REGARD TO THE LEGIS-
LATIVE ELECTIONS.

A. THOSE WHOSE POLICY IS TO IMPROVE EVEN FURTHER THE CLOSE
AND COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PHILIPPINES AND THE
UNITED STATES LOOK ON THE HOLDING OF FREE LEGISLATIVE
ELECTIONS AS A HIGHLY FAVORABLE DEVELOPMENT -- ONE WHICH
WILL DEMONSTRATE CREDIBLY A SIGNIFICANT STEP FORWARD
TOWARD NORMALIZATION IN THE PHILIPPINES.

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B. WE APPLAUD THE DECISION TO HOLD ELECTIONS AND THE
MEASURES WHICH PRESIDENT MARCOS HAS ANNOUNCED FOR THE CON-
DUCT OF THE ELECTIONS, SUCH AS FREEDOM OF PUBLIC DEBATE AND
DECREE WHICH PERMIT PERSONS WHO HAVE BEEN DETAINED FOR
SUBVERSION BUT NOT CONVICTED TO BE CANDIDATES. WE ASSUME

THAT THE DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN PRESS WILL BE ABLE TO COVER

FREELY THE ELECTIONS, AS HAS BEEN THE CASE WITH PAST REFERENDA. WE HOPE THAT PRESIDENT MARCOS WILL CONTINUE TO TAKE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO PRESERVE THE CREDIBILITY OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS.

C. IN THE AMERICAN PERCEPTION OF CREDIBLE ELECTIONS, THE PARTICIPATION OF RECOGNIZED OPPOSITION CANDIDATES AND A REASONABLE OPPORTUNITY FOR THEM TO BE ELECTED IS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE. WHILE IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE FOR THE UNITED STATES TO MAKE SUGGESTIONS AS TO HOW THE GOP INTENDS TO CONDUCT ITS ELECTIONS PRESIDENT MARCOS SHOULD BEAR THIS IN MIND. WE WOULD HOPE THAT DECISION ON PROCEDURES (FYI: WE HAVE PARTICULARLY IN MIND THE BLOC VOTING DECISION. END FYI) WOULD NOT UNDERMINE THE FAVORABLE IMPACT OF THE DECISION WHICH MARCOS HAS ALREADY MADE AND WHICH HAS THE POTENTIAL FOR DEMONSTRATING A MAJOR STEP TOWARD NORMALIZATION.

D. FOR OUR PART, WE WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE CLEAR TO ONE AND ALL THAT WE BELIEVE THAT THE MOST APPROPRIATE MEANS OF REGISTERING DISSENT AND OFFERING ALTERNATIVES TO THE STATUS QUO IS THE SUBMISSION OF ONE'S IDEAS AND CANDIDACY TO THE JUDGMENT OF HIS PEERS AT THE BALLOT BOX IN FAIR ELECTIONS.

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3. WE WOULD EXPECT TO MAKE THE POINT OUTLINED IN PARAGRAPH 1D ABOVE, TO MARCOS' OPPOSITION BOTH IN THE PHILIPPINES AND HERE (E.G., DURING MANGLAPUS AND PSINAKIS CALL ON HOLBROOKE FEBRUARY 3). VANCE

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NNN

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